SECRET FREEDOM
PART 2 OF 4
ISSUE 42
SEGA
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SONIC UNIVERSE™
WHEN SONIC IS AWAY...
...THEY MAKE EVIL PAY.
UNSUNG HEROES
Starring:
SILVER the HEDGEHOG · ELIAS ACORN · KING IXIS NAUGUS
and GEOFFREY St. JOHN as the IXIS APPRENTICE

Welcome to the planet Mobius - - a world beyond what you know from the SEGA games! Where Silver the Hedgehog has joined a secret team of freedom fighters to undermine the evil King Ixis Naugus and save the future!

SONIC UNIVERSE™

PREVIOUSLY...

The city of New Mobotropolis is under SIEGE! Sonic the Hedgehog's home city continues to reel following the devastating attacks of Dr. Eggman. These attacks have lead to the destruction of the city's heroes, the Freedom Fighters.

To make matters worse, the city has also been attacked from within! The evil Wizard Ixis Naugus has usurped the crown of Acorn, and driven the former king Elias Acorn and his family into exile! King Naugus has used his dark magic to turn the tide of public opinion in his favor, but such an unstable and evil ruler has put the entire kingdom and its people in jeopardy.

But in the shadows a new team of Secret Freedom Fighters have formed to do the work that the public heroes can't do – put an end to Naugus's rule! To take down the brutal tyrant, the SFF have turned to tracking down his apprentice, Geoffrey St. John, as he traveled abroad for reasons unknown. Geoffrey was confronted by Silver's squad while extracting a mysterious artifact from ancient ruins. While the slippery skunk managed to escape, he was also tagged with a tracking device.

Silver, Shard and Larry Lynx are battling Geoffrey, while Elias Acorn, Leeta and Lyco are charged with tracking Naugus and confronting the terror BELOW THE CITY...

WHO'S WHO

ELIAS ACORN
DEPOSED KING --CALL SIGN "KING"

LYCO WOLF
WOLF PACK TWIN --CALL SIGN "QUEEN OF HEARTS"

LEETA WOLF
WOLF PACK TWIN --CALL SIGN "QUEEN OF DIAMONDS"

KING NAUGUS
CONNIVING IXIS WIZARD

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"IT'S JUST BEFORE DAWN, AND THE TARGET IS ON THE MOVE."

"HE'S BEEN HEADING FOR THE SAME POINT IN THE CITY AT THE SAME TIME FOR DAYS NOW--LIKE CLOCKWORK."

UP EARLY, YOUR MAJESTY?

JUST LOOKING AFTER THAT NASTY HOLE IN THE GROUND THAT THE ARMADA LEFT US.

DON'T YOU WORRY OVER IT.

KING IXIS NAUGUS (EVIL?) WIZARD

UNSUNG HEROES PART 2: THE TERROR BELOW

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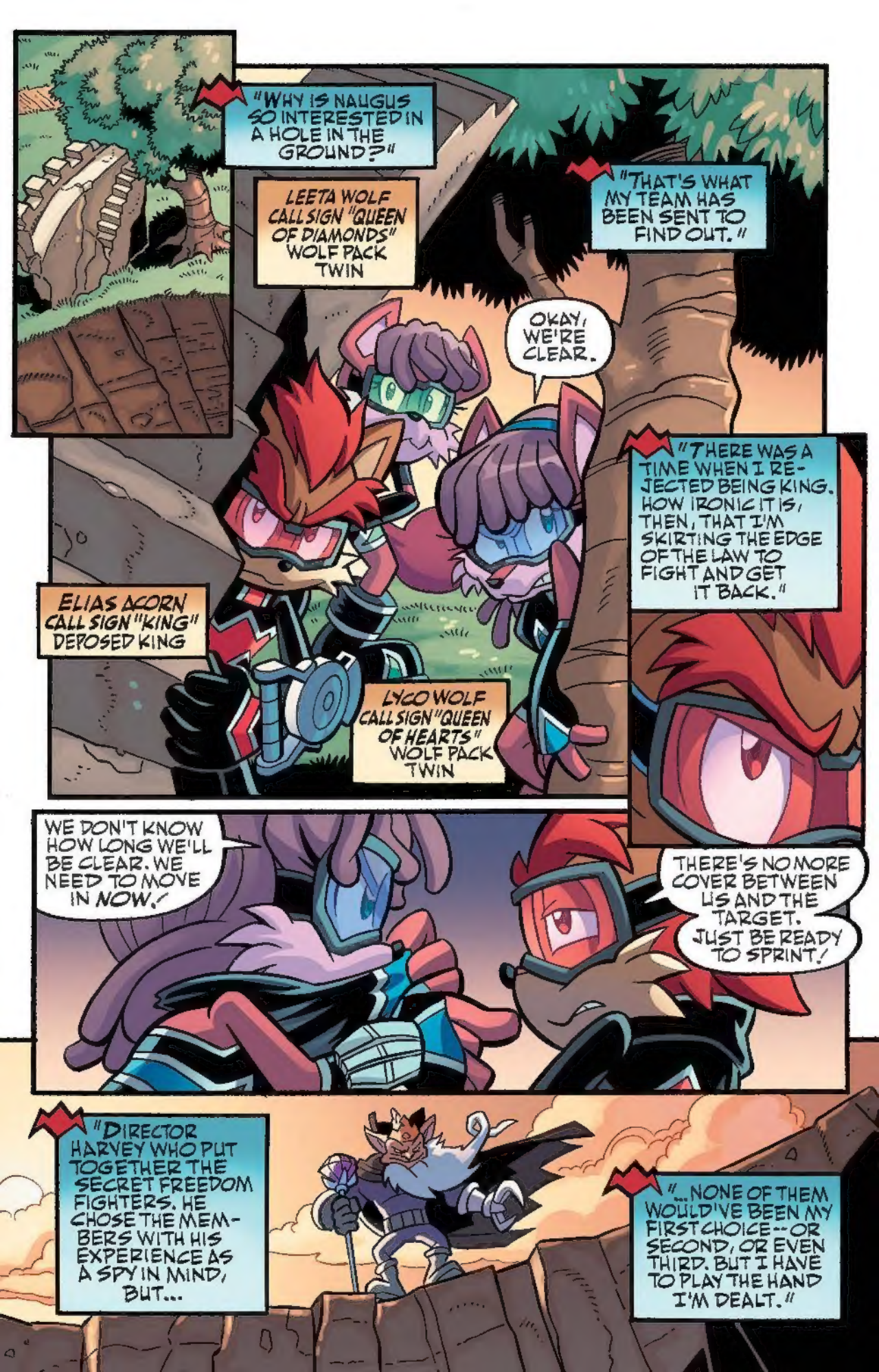
"'THE PIT' IS WHERE CASTLE ACORN ONCE STOOD."

"THE BATTLE BIRD ARMADA INVADED AND BLASTED A HOLE THAT'S WHO KNOWS *HOW* DEEP."*

"WITHOUT NICOLE TO CONTROL THEM, THE NANITES COULD ONLY REBUILD SO FAR. SHE WOULD'VE HAD THE CASTLE REBUILT IN HOURS."

*BABYLON RISING, S.U. #33-36


"WHY IS NAUGUS SO INTERESTED IN A HOLE IN THE GROUND?"
LEETA WOLF CALL SIGN "QUEEN OF DIAMONDS" WOLF PACK TWIN
"THAT'S WHAT MY TEAM HAS BEEN SENT TO FIND OUT."
OKAY, WE'RE CLEAR.
"THERE WAS A TIME WHEN I REJECTED BEING KING. HOW IRONIC IT IS, THEN, THAT I'M SKIRTING THE EDGE OF THE LAW TO FIGHT AND GET IT BACK."
ELIAS ACORN CALL SIGN "KING" DEPOSED KING
LYCO WOLF CALL SIGN "QUEEN OF HEARTS" WOLF PACK TWIN
WE DON'T KNOW HOW LONG WE'LL BE CLEAR. WE NEED TO MOVE IN NOW.
THERE'S NO MORE COVER BETWEEN US AND THE TARGET. JUST BE READY TO SPRINT!
"DIRECTOR HARVEY WHO PUT TOGETHER THE SECRET FREEDOM FIGHTERS. HE CHOSE THE MEMBERS WITH HIS EXPERIENCE AS A SPY IN MIND, BUT...
"...NONE OF THEM WOULD'VE BEEN MY FIRST CHOICE--OR SECOND, OR EVEN THIRD. BUT I HAVE TO PLAY THE HAND I'M DEALT."

NOW!
Oh MAN Oh MAN Oh MAN...
ACTIVATE WING-SUITS!
I HATE HEIGHTS!
HATE-HATE HATE-HATE HATE HEIGHTS...

eh?

hmm... THE QUICKSTER IS AWAY, AND THE WALRUS IS TOO FAT TO BE STEALTHY.
PERHAPS IT WAS JUST THE WIND. OR ONE OF YOU. NEVER GIVE ME A MOMENT'S PEACE...
DON'T PLAY COY-- OF COURSE I MEAN YOU!
THAT'S NO EXCUSE.
SILENCE! ALL OF YOU!
WE'RE CLEAR.
WAS HE TALKING TO US?
I DON'T THINK SO. IF HE KNEW WE WERE HERE, WHY DIDN'T HE ATTACK?
I DON'T KNOW. WHO ELSE COULD HE BE TALKING TO?

CAN YOU CUT THE STUPID GOSSIP?
ONCE I GET THIS EXPLOSIVE SET TO SECURE OUR EXIT, WE'LL...
EXCUSE ME, KING, BUT HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN A SECRET AGENT?
WHAT? I'VE NEVER BEEN... WELL, NOT LIKE THIS, BUT...
EXACTLY! YOU DISMISSED US ON DAY ONE WHEN YOU HAVE NO EXPERIENCE OF YOUR OWN!*
BESIDES, IT'S NOT LIKE WE'RE FIGHTING FOR OUR KINGDOM HERE!
* GET THE FULL SCOOP IN THE UP-COMING STH #240!
RIGHT! WE WANTED TO DO MORE FOR THE COMMON GOOD...
...AND LEAPT AT THE CHANCE WHEN WE RECEIVED A REQUEST FOR HELP.

"BUT WE RECEIVED A WELCOME EVEN LESS WARM THAN YOURS!"
BUT...WE THOUGHT YOU SENT A REQUEST FOR HELP?
BAH!
I DO NOT NEED YOU TO...
I'LL REMIND HIS MAJESTY-- AGAIN-- HE SITS ON THE COUNCIL?
...WE DO NOT NEED YOU.
MY POWER ALONE IS ENOUGH... AND WE MUST PUT UP WITH TEAM FREEDOM'S BUMBLING.
THE CITY'S CITIZENS WILL CARE FOR THEMSELVES, THANK YOU. BEGONE.
BUT--!
SINCE WE ARE ABOUT TO TAKE A RECESS ANYWAY, I'LL SHOW THE LADIES OUT.
THIS WAY, PLEASE. QUICKLY. AND MAKE SURE WE'RE NOT BEING FOLLOWED.

WELCOME TO NEW MOBOTROPOLIS, LADIES. I AM DIRECTOR HARVEY WHO. I AM THE ONE WHO SENT FOR YOU... AND I APOLOGIZE FOR THE CONFUSION.
BUT THE GRAND CHIEF SAID WE WERE TO BE SERVING THE KING?
I'VE GOT TO RETURN TO MY DUTIES.
THEY'RE ALL YOURS, HARVEY.
AND YOU ARE. THE TRUE KING STEPPED DOWN TO PRESERVE THE PEACE DURING THESE TRYING TIMES. BUT THE ACTING KING IS NOT TO BE TRUSTED.
SONIC'S TEAM FIGHTERS IS ABROAD FIGHTING DR. EGGMAN. ROTOR'S TEAM FREEDOM IS BOUND BY LAW AND LOYALTY.
I'M PUTTING TOGETHER A TEAM TO PROTECT THE CITY IN WAYS THE OTHER TWO TEAMS CANNOT.
HEROES WITH UNTAPPED POTENTIAL WHO CAN AVOID THE SPOTLIGHT AND STILL KEEP US SAFE.
WILL YOU HELP ME?
THAT'S NOT WHAT WE THOUGHT WE WERE SIGNING UP FOR...
AND WE'RE USED TO THE DIRECT APPROACH...
BUT NAUGUS IS A THREAT THAT MUST BE DEFEATED.
YOU'VE GOT YOURSELF A COUPLE OF SECRET AGENTS, DIRECTOR WHO.
EXCELLENT.
I KNEW I COULD COUNT ON YOU GIRLS.

AND WE GOT YOU OUT OF A FERAL FOREST, DIDN'T WE?
THE DIRECTOR THOUGHT THE TEAM PERFORMED WELL ON OUR FIRST MISSION. *
*SUBSCRIBE TO SONIC THE HEDGEHOG AND SEE FOR YOURSELF IN STH # 239-240 COMING SOON!
BUT IF YOU CAN'T DECIDE WHETHER THIS TEAM IS WORTH IT OR NOT, THEN WE CAN'T TRUST YOU TO LEAD US.
SET THE BOMB. WE'LL HANDLE THE REST.
THIS TUNNEL GOES ON FOREVER. WE MUST BE HALF-WAY ACROSS THE CITY BY NOW.
AND GIVEN OUR DIRECTION, I'D SAY THAT WE'RE...
...DIRECTLY UNDER THE ROYAL MILITARY HQ. IS HE PLANNING ON ATTACKING THE COUNCIL FROM BELOW?
IF SO, WHY MAKE SUCH A BIG, ORNATE ROOM?
AND WHAT'S WITH ALL THE MAGIC RUNES?
HRRK... HRPH...

GIVE IN, ALREADY! YOUR FIGHT IS FUTILE.
NO...MY BODY... YOU'RE JUST GHOSTS...
GHOSTS THAT WILL HAUNT YOU TO YOUR END. THE SOONER THAT COMES, THE SOONER YOU'LL BE RELEASED!
BEGONE! I HAVE WORK TO DO!
HAHAHA! LOOK AT HIM STRUGGLE!
PARGH!! VILLAINS! PARA-SITES!
AT THE VERY LEAST YOU CAN STOP TRYING TO MAINTAIN THIS FORM. NOBODY CAN SEE YOU HERE. LET LOOSE A LITTLE!
IF...IT... WILL... QUIET... YOU...
RRAAAUGH!
AAHHH!!
WHO'S THERE?!

MEANWHILE...
...AND WHERE DO THEY GET THE GALL TO TELL ME HOW TO GO ABOUT SAVING MY KINGDOM...
...BUT YOU SHOULDN'T BE WASTING YOUR ENERGY DOING THIS, NOT WHEN IT CLEARLY JEOPARDIZES THE MISSION!
AND WHERE DO I GET TO JUDGE ANYONE, GIVEN HOW I'VE HANDLED THINGS IN THE PAST? I SHOULD FOLLOW MY OWN ADVICE AND STOP PICKING FIGHTS WITH MY OWN TEAM!
I'LL LINK BACK UP WITH THE TWINS. MAYBE I CAN APOLOGIZE AND GET US ALL FOCUSED ON THE MISSION BEFORE SOMETHING--
AAAHHH!!

WWOOOSH
RUMBLE
RUMBLE
KRAK
RUMBLE
HE'S TURNING THE PLACE INTO A MAZE TO TRAP US. CLEVER.
...AND IT'S WORKING.
CRUD.

KING! WE'VE GOT TROUBLE! I BLEW OUR COVER, AND--!
WHAT THE--?! THERE WASN'T A BRANCHING PATH HERE BEFORE!
HE'S RE-SHAPING THE CAVE TO TRAP US AND TO HIDE WHAT-EVER HE'S DOING DOWN HERE!
I'VE BEEN MARKING THE RIGHT WAY--
UHH... ARE YOU SURE ABOUT THAT?
OKAY... NEW PLAN.
SPLIT UP! STICK TO ONE WALL AND DOUBLE-BACK IF YOU HIT A DEAD END!
WHY DID YOU HAVE TO SAY "DEAD END"?

PANT!
PANT!
PANT!
YOU CANNOT HIDE, INTRUDERS! THERE IS NO ESCAPE! YOU WILL TAKE MY SECRET TO YOUR GRAVES!
WHO ARE YOU? WHERE ARE YOU?!
...WHAT IN THE WORLD HAPPENED TO HIM?!

NO!
KEEP IT TOGETHER! JUST DOUBLE-BACK AND TAKE LYCO'S TUNNEL. IF THAT'S WRONG, WE'LL TAKE ELIAS'S AND--
THERE YOU ARE!
AAAHH!
POK
WHO DARES?!
?
NICE TRY, BUTTER-FINGERS.

FLASH-BANG! TAKE COVER!
BUT... HOW...?!
RAARRRHHGH!!
BLAM
THIS WAY!
I FOUND SOME OF MY MARKS AT THE END OF THIS ROUTE!

JUST A FEW MORE METERS AND WE SHOULD BE HOME FR--
"DEAD END"... "HOME FREE"... YOU'RE A BIGGER JINX THAN JOKER!
MAN, I HOPE THEIR MISSION IS GOING BETTER THAN OURS!*
*SEE FOR YOURSELF-- LAST ISSUE.
THERE'S OUR EXIT! WING-SUITS THE SECOND YOU'RE CLEAR!
RARGH!! NO ESCAPE!

DEET
BLAM
DON'T THINK ABOUT THE HEIGHTS!
I DON'T CARE RIGHT NOW!

NO ESCAPE!

HURH-HURH-HURH...
I DON'T KNOW WHO YOU WERE, INTERLOPERS... BUT YOU WON'T BOTHER ME AGAIN.
IS THIS THE END OF THE SECRET FREEDOM FIGHTERS? ALREADY?! AND WHAT IS NAUGUS PREPARING UNDER THE CITY? SURE LOOKS DANGEROUS! COME BACK NEXT TIME FOR ALL THE ANSWERS! UNTIL THEN, ENJOY SONIC THE HEDGEHOG, THE SONIC SUPER SPECIAL MAGAZINE, AND THE ENTIRE SONIC GRAPHIC NOVEL LIBRARY!